



Herzl Robert Spiro

April 22, 1935 - February 7, 2023

Herzl Robert Spiro

Born in Burlington, VT on April 22, 1935, to Rabbi Saul S. Spiro and Dorothy Mazel passed away in Milwaukee on February 7, 2023. He was an academic psychiatrist, a philanthropist, and a leader of the Jewish community, and will be remembered for his work on the Immigration and Absorption Committee of the Jewish Agency, which was instrumental in absorbing immigrants to Israel from Ethiopia and from the former Soviet Union.

He was educated at the University of Vermont, both undergraduate and Medical School; and then after an internship at New York Hospital - Cornell Medical Center he did a residency in psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he joined the faculty and became director of outpatient services. He was a founding member of the "community mental health" movement, and as he liked to say, "a rabbi who takes Blue Cross/Blue Shield." As Director of the Rutgers (NJ) Community Health Center, he developed community outreach teams to facilitate the deinstitutionalization of people requiring mental health care.

In 1976 he moved to Milwaukee to become Commissioner of Mental Health for Milwaukee County and the Chairman of Psychiatry at the Medical College of Wisconsin. When those programs suffered deep cuts in public funding he resigned. Eventually he led the psychiatric residency program for the

University of Wisconsin, but by this time his passion and focus was service to the Jewish Agency in Israel, which he saw as "returning to his father's house." He fought for justice no matter the field of endeavor, and he was particularly concerned with creating psychiatric outreach programs for everyone regardless of their income.

He had three children with Joanna H. Spiro: David, a professor and business consultant in New York City, Lev, a filmmaker and fine art photographer in Los Angeles, and Miriam, a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in New York City. His grandchildren are Ezra and Katya (David) and Kaia and Sarit (Mimi). He was married to Barbara Kohl from 1979 until his death, and was devoted to her three children, Daniel, Beth, and David and their grandchildren. He was a loving brother to Saul M. Spiro, who passed away last year, and to his sister Rena Ziegler of Bellingham, WA.

In 2020 Herzl published a memoir titled "Of Hope," which is available on amazon. Services will be at Congregation Emanu El B'ne Jeshurun, 2020 West Brown Deer Road, River Hills, WI 53217 on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 1:30 pm. Interment following at Spring Hill Cemetery, 166 S. Hawley, Ct., Milwaukee.

Live stream hosted by Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun:
<https://www.ceebj.org/worship/watch-live-service>

Previous Events

Service

FEB 9. 1:30 PM (CT)

Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun
2020 W. Brown Deer Rd.
River Hills, WI 53217

Shiva

FEB 9. 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Grinker Residence
3542 N Hackett Ave
Shorewood, WI 53211

Shiva

FEB 10. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Grinker Residence
3542 N Hackett Ave
Shorewood, WI 53211

Tribute Wall



“ *Herzl Robert Spiro*

October 06, 2023 at 01:40 PM



“ *My deepest sympathy to Barbara and the family in memory of Herzl, a remarkable man and he will be missed by all. Sincerely, Suzy E.*

Suzy Ettinger - February 09, 2023 at 11:29 AM



“ *Herzl was an outstanding Human Being - he responded to calls for involvement in several of my cases which had a mental health issue associated with behaviors at Issue in both Criminal and Employment matters - he demonstrated both Intellect and Empathy to any and all of such folks - He will be missed - my heartfelt Sympathies to Barbara and all of Herzl's surviving family 🙏🙏💕 Franklyn Gimbel*

Franklyn Gimbel - February 09, 2023 at 07:38 AM